

Testimony of Solomon Greene
Nominee to be Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research of the
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
April 18, 2023

Chairman Brown, Ranking Member Scott, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as you consider my nomination to serve as Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research at HUD.

I want to begin by thanking President Biden and Secretary Fudge for the confidence and trust they placed in me by nominating me for this important position. I would also like to thank my family for their love and unwavering support.

Senators, Secretary Fudge often says that “bringing people home is at the heart of everything we do at HUD.” It is also at the heart of my life’s work. I have dedicated my career to helping all families find and keep stable and affordable housing.

This is something I grew to appreciate from an early age. I was raised primarily by a single mother who earned so little while working full-time as a nurse that we received Medicaid and food stamps. By economic necessity, my family often moved to where we could afford the rent until my mother was able to scrimp and save just enough for a downpayment on a house in a rural county in New York.

That house and property, where my mother still lives with my brother, his wife and my baby nephew, provided the stability I needed to be able to focus on school and my future. I truly believe it is why I am able to sit here before you today as a nominee.

These early experiences also instilled in me the recognition that a home is more than a roof over your head – it is also a platform for health and wellbeing and a downpayment on your children’s future.

Throughout my career, I have strived to give every family the opportunities I was given. The American Dream is the idea that, no matter who you are or where you come from, if you work hard and give it your all, you will succeed. I have dedicated my career to ensuring that where you come from does not determine who you can become later in life.

HUD’s mission – to create strong, sustainable and inclusive communities and ensure quality homes for all – embodies that promise. And my contribution to fulfilling this promise has been to support innovative, evidence-based, and data-driven housing policies at all levels of government.

For years, I have worked with federal, state and local leaders to design and test policies and programs to produce and preserve affordable housing, revitalize communities, expand neighborhood choices, and boost upward mobility.

Most importantly for the position to which I have been nominated, I am passionate about using the best available data and evidence to inform public policy decisions. I am first and foremost a researcher with a strong and proven commitment to evidence-based policymaking.

I have demonstrated this through over two decades of work on data-driven and community-informed housing policy: from the start of my career working in local government and for a community-based affordable housing developer, as a graduate student in law and urban planning, as a legal research fellow and adjunct professor at NYU, during over seven years as a senior researcher at the Urban Institute, and now in my current role at HUD.

In all my work, I have applied independent, unbiased, and objective research to help ensure that our public policies are rooted in evidence, maximize the impact of limited resources, and respond to the realities of people and communities on the ground.

I am also passionate about bringing together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to identify evidence-based and data-driven policy solutions to our nation's housing and community development challenges. I firmly believe that rigorous research can provide diverse stakeholders a common frame through which to assess problems and a shared foundation to find solutions.

We are at a moment in our nation's history when HUD's mission is more important than ever. It is a mission I have endeavored to support with evidence, innovation and compassion from the very start of my career. I would be deeply honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve as HUD's seventeenth Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to your questions.